



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

California State Office
2800 Cottage Way, Suite W1623
Sacramento, CA 95825
www.blm.gov/ca



October 28, 2013

In Reply Refer To:
1400-335 (CA945) P

EMS TRANSMISSION: 10/28/13
Instruction Memorandum No. CA-2014-001
Expires: 9/30/15

To: Managers and Supervisors

From: State Director

Subject: Use of Panels in Staffing Vacant Positions

Purpose: This Instruction Memorandum updates existing policy for conducting panels when staffing vacant positions.

Panels may be used at the discretion of the selecting official. There are two forms of panels; recommendation panels and selection panels. Selecting officials may opt to use one or both for a single vacancy. The use of selection panels is strongly encouraged for Supervisory, GS-12 and above, positions. It is extremely important that supervisors in Bureau of Land Management California be consistent with this policy in their use of panels to evaluate candidates for positions.

Action: Selecting officials, in consultation with Human Resources, will determine if a panel will be used and who will serve on the panel.

Panels must consist of three members; at least one panel member must be a subject matter expert and the majority of panel members must be at an equivalent or higher grade than the full performance level of the position being filled. Effort should be made to ensure the panel is comprised of diverse individuals.

One member of the panel will be designated as an EEO/Diversity representative, with responsibility to ensure that the attached merit principles and nondiscriminatory provisions are adhered to. When a Diversity Change Agent (DCA) serves as a panel member, he/she will be the designated EEO/Diversity representative. For questions related to their role and responsibility, the EEO/Diversity representative will contact the Equal Employment Opportunity Office (EEO) at 916-978-4385 prior to conducting the interviews.

All panel members must participate in all panel activities, either in person or by telephone.

Interview questions will be reviewed by EEO prior to interviews being conducted. All documentation (notes) from the panel process will be collected and maintained by the selecting

official and kept confidential for two years from the date of the selection. In the event a selection process results in an EEO action, the selecting official will be responsible for ensuring copies of the documentation (notes) are provided to the EEO investigator.

Recommendation Panel

This type of panel is normally used for the purpose of narrowing the list of candidates through interviews, a paper review of the resumes or both, making it more manageable for the selecting official to interview and select. If a paper review is opted for, job-related criteria must be developed by the panel members in consultation with the selecting official for their use in determining which applicants will be referred to the selecting official. Candidates eliminated during this panel process will not be referred to or considered by the selecting official. It is encouraged that one member of the panel be a Diversity Change Agent (see attached link).

- It is the responsibility of the selecting official to advise the panel on those competencies he/she feels are most important for successful performance in the position.
- The selecting official may not serve on this panel.

Selection Panel

The use of this panel is to jointly select the best candidates(s) for the position.

- The supervisor of the vacant position will serve as the chair of the panel and it is his/her responsibility to advise the other panel members on those competencies he/she feels are most important for successful performance in the position.
- Panel members will check references before jointly selecting the best candidate.

Special note for Law Enforcement Ranger Panels: The designated panel chair is responsible for coordinating with the Special-Agent-in-Charge (SAC) or the SAC's designee. In accordance with Law Enforcement General Order 07, the SAC, or the SAC's designee, will participate in the interview and selection process to provide technical expertise in evaluating candidates.

General Requirements

If a panel member becomes aware of a potential conflict of interest, he/she must recuse him/herself from participating on the panel. A conflict of interest may include a personal friend or relative as a candidate. Involvement in a prior or pending EEO complaint filed by a candidate for the position may also be grounds for recusal. The panel member will simply inform the selecting official of the recusal due to a conflict.

If the vacancy announcement stipulates that no additional information may be accepted from the applicant after the closing date, the panel must not accept any other material during the interview.

No discussion of any tentative selection is to occur until the selecting official makes the official announcement.

Questions concerning the above policy may be addressed to Anna Sisson, Chief, Staffing and Classification Section, Branch of Human Resources, at (916) 978-4477.

Signed by:
Angie Lara
Associate State Director

Authenticated by:
Richard A. Erickson
Records Management

Attachments - 2

1. Panel Member Instructions (3 pp)
2. DCA Roster – (1 p)